

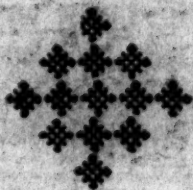
THE 4408 bb
14
GRAVE.

A
POEM.

By ROBERT BLAIR.

The house appointed for all living. JOB.

THE SIXTEENTH EDITION.



GLASGOW:

Printed and sold by J. and M. ROBERTSON.

MDCCLXXXVI.

THE
G. R. A. V. E.

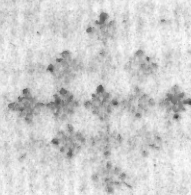
P. O. E. M.

ROBERT BLAIR.



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THE SIXTEENTH EDITION



G. L. A. S. G. W.

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T H E G R A V E.

A P O E M.

WHILST some affect the *Sun*, and some the *shade*,
Some flee the *city*, some the *hermitage*;
Their *aims* as various, as the *roads* they take
In journeying thro' life;—the task be mine
To paint the gloomy horrors of the *Tomb*;
Th' appointed place of rendezvous, where all
These travellers meet. — Thy succours I implore,
Eternal King! whose potent arm sustains
The keys of hell and death. — The **GRAVE**, dread
thing!

Men shiver when thou'rt nam'd: Nature appall'd
Shakes off her wonted firmness. — Ah! how dark
Thy long-extended realms, and rueful wastes;
Where nought but *Silence reigns*, and *Night*, dark
Night,

Dark as was *Chaos*, ere the infant *Sun*
Was roll'd together, or had try'd his beams
Athwart the gloom profound. — The sickly taper,
By glimmering through the low-brow'd misty vaults,
Furr'd round with mouldy damps, and ropy slime,
Lets fall a supernumerary horror,
And only serves to make thy night more hideous.

Well do I know thee by thy trusty *Yew*,
 Chearless, unsocial plant; that loves to dwell
 'Midst skulls and coffins, epitaphs and worms:
 Where light-heel'd *ghosts* and visionary *shades*,
 Beneath the wan cold moon (as fame reports)
 Embody'd, thick, perform their mystic rounds.---
 No other merriment, dull tree, is thine.

See yonder hallow'd *Fane*;—the pious work
 Of names once fam'd, now dubious or forgot,
 And bury'd, 'midst the wreck of things which were:
 There lie interr'd the more illustrious dead.---
 The wind is up: Hark! how it howls! Methinks
 Till now, I never heard a sound so dreary:
 Doors creak, and windows clap, and Night's foul bird,
 Rook'd in the spire, screams loud: the gloomy isles,
 Black-plaister'd, and hung round with shreds of 'scut-
 cheons
 And tatter'd coats of arms, send back the sound
 Laden with heavier airs, from the *low vaults*,
 The *mansions* of the dead. — Rous'd from their
 slumbers,

In grim array, the grisly *spectres* rise,
 Grin horrible, and obstinately sullen
 Pass and repass, hush'd as the foot of *Night*.
 Again the screech-owl shrieks: ungracious sound!
 I'll hear no more, it makes one's blood run chill.

Quite round the pile, a row of reverend *elms*
 (Coæval near with that) all ragged shew,
 Long lash'd by the rude winds. Some rift half down
 Their branchless trunks: others so thin a top,
 That scarce two crows can lodge in the same tree.
 Strange things, the neighbours say, have happen'd
 here:

Wild shrieks have issu'd from the hollow tombs;
 Dead men have come again, and walk'd about:
 And the great bell has toll'd, unring, untouch'd,

(Such tales their chear, at Wake or Gossipping,
When it draws near to witching-time of night.)

Oft, in the lone *church-yard* at night, I've seen
By glimpse of moon-shine, chequering thro' the trees,
The *school-boy*, with his satchel in his hand,
Whistling aloud to bear his courage up,
And lightly tripping o'er the long flat stones,
(With nettles skirted, and with moss o'ergrown)
That tell, in homely phrase, who lie below.
Sudden he starts, and hears, or thinks he hears
The sound of something purring at his heels:
Full fast he flies, and dares not look behind him,
Till, out of breath, he overtakes his fellows;
Who gather round, and wonder at the tale
Of horrid *Apparition*, tall and ghastly,
That walks at dead of night, or takes his stand
O'er some new-open'd grave; and (strange to tell!)
Evanishes at crowing of the cock.

The new-made *Widow*, too, I've sometimes 'spy'd,
Sad sight! slow moving o'er the prostrate dead:
Listless, she crawls along in doleful black,
Whilst bursts of sorrow gush from either eye,
Fast falling down her now untasted cheek.
Prone on the lowly *grave* of the dear *man*
She drops; whilst busy meddling Memory,
In barbarous succession, musters up
The past endearments of their softer hours,
Tenacious of its theme. Still, still she thinks
She sees him, and, indulging the fond thought,
Clings yet more closely to the senseless turf,
Nor heeds the passenger who looks that way.

Invidious *Grave*—how dost thou rend in sunder
Whom Love has knit, and Sympathy made one!
A tie more stubborn far than Nature's band.
Friendship! mysterious cement of the soul;

THE GRAVE.

Sweetner of life, and solder of society;
I owe thee much. Thou hast deserv'd from me,
Far, far beyond what I can ever pay.

Oft have I prov'd the labours of thy love,
And the warm efforts of the gentle heart,
Anxious to please.—Oh! when my friend and I,
In some thick wood, have wander'd heedless on,
Hid from the vulgar eye; and sat us down
Upon the sloping cowslip-cover'd bank,
Where the pure limpid stream has slid along
In grateful errors, thro' the under-wood,
Sweet-murmuring: Methought the shrill-tongu'd

Thrush

Mended his song of love; the sooty *Black-bird*
Mellow'd his pipe, and soften'd ev'ry note:
The *Eglantine* smell'd sweeter, and the *Rose*
Assum'd a dye more deep; whilst ev'ry flower
Vy'd with its fellow-plant in luxury
Of dress.—Oh! then, the longest summer's day
Seem'd too, too much in haste: still the full heart
Had not imparted half: 'Twas happiness
Too exquisite to last.—Of joys departed
Not to return, how painful the remembrance!

Dull *Grave*—thou spoil'st the dance of youth-
ful blood,

Strik'st out the dimple from the cheek of mirth,
And ev'ry smirking feature from the face;
Branding our laughter with the name of madness.
Where are the jesters now? the men of health
Complexionally pleasant? Where the droll,
Whose ev'ry look, and gesture, was a joke
To clapping theatres, and shouting crowds;
And made even thick-lip'd musing *Melancholy*,
To gather up her face into a smile
Before she was aware? Ah! sullen now,
And dumb, as the green turf that covers them.

Where

Where are the mighty thunderbolts of war?
The *Roman Cæsars*, and the *Grecian Chiefs*,
The boast of story? Where the *hot-brain'd youth*,
Who the *Tiara* at his pleasure tore
From *Kings* of all the then discover'd globe;
And cry'd forsooth, because his arm was hamper'd,
And had not room enough to do its work?
Alas! how slim, dishonourably slim,
And cram'd into a space we blush to name!
Proud Royalty! how alter'd in thy looks!
How blank thy features, and how wan thy hue!
Son of the morning! whither art thou gone?
Where hast thou hid thy many-spangled head,
And the majestic menace of thine eyes
Felt from afar? Pliant and powerless now,
Like new-born infant wound up in his swathes,
Or victim tumbled flat upon its back,
That throbs beneath the sacrificer's knife.
Mute, must thou bear the strife of little tongues,
And coward insults of the base-born croud;
That grudge a privilege, thou never hadst,
But only hop'd for in the peaceful *Grave*,
Of being unmolested and alone.
Arabia's gums and odoriferous drugs,
And honours by the *Heralds* duly paid
In mode and form, ev'n to a very scruple:—
Oh cruel *Irony!* These come too late;
And only *mock*, whom they were meant to honour.
Surely there's not a dungeon-slave, that's bury'd
In the high-way, unshrouded and uncoffin'd,
But lies as soft, and sleeps as sound as he.—
Sorry Pre-eminence, of high descent,
Above the vulgar born, to rot in state!

But see! the well-plum'd *Herse* comes nodding on
Stately and slow; and properly attended
By the whole sable tribe, that painful watch
The sick man's door, and live upon the dead,

By letting out their persons by the hour,
 To mimic sorrow, when the heart's not sad.
 How rich the trappings ! now they're all unfurl'd,
 And glittering in the sun ; triumphant entries
 Of Conquerors, and Coronation-pomps,
 In glory scarce exceed. Great gluts of people
 Retard th' unwieldy show ; whilst from the casements
 And houses tops, ranks behind ranks, close wedg'd,
 Hang bellying o'er. But tell us, why this waste ?
 Why this ado in earthing up a Carcase
 That's fall'n into disgrace ; and, in the nostril,
 Smells horrible ?—Ye *Undertakers* tell us,
 'Midst all the gorgeous figures you exhibit,
 Why is the principal conceal'd, for which
 You make this mighty stir ?——'Tis wisely done :
 What would offend the eye, in a good picture,
 The painter casts discreetly into shades.

Proud *Lineage*, now how little thou appear'st,—
 Below the envy of the private man.
Honour, that middle some officious ill,
 Pursues thee ev'n to death ; nor there stops short.
 Strange persecution ! when the *Grave* itself
 Is no protection from rude suffrance.

Absurd to think to over-reach the *Grave*,
 And, from the wreck of names, to rescue ours.
 The best concerted schemes men lay for fame
 Die fast away : only themselves die faster.
 The far fam'd *Sculptor*, and the laurell'd *Bard*,
 (Those bold insurers of deathless fame)
 Supply their little feeble aids in vain.
 The tapering *Pyramid*, th' *Egyptian's* pride
 And wonder of the world ; whose spiky top
 Has wounded the thick cloud, and long outliv'd
 The angry shaking of the winter's storm ;
 Yet, spent at last by th' injuries of heaven,
 Shatter'd with age and furrow'd o'er with years,

The

The mystic *cone*, with *hieroglyphics* crusted,
 At once gives way. Oh! lamentable sight:—
 The labour of whole ages lumbers down,
 A hideous and mishapen length of ruins.
 Sepulchral columns wrestle but in vain
 With all-subduing *Time*: his cank'ring hand,
 With calm deliberate malice, wasteth them:
 Worn on the age of days, the brass consumes,
 The busto moulders, and the deep-cut marble,
 Unsteady to the steel, gives up its charge.
Ambition, half convicted of her folly,
 Hangs down the head, and reddens at the tale.

Here all the mighty *Troublers of the earth*,
 Who swam to sov'reign rule thro' seas of blood;
 Th' oppressive, sturdy, man-destroying Villains,
 Who ravag'd kingdoms, and laid empires waste,
 And, in a cruel wantonness of power,
 Thinn'd states of half their people, and gave up
 To want, the rest: now, like a storm that's spent,
 Lie hush'd, and meanly sneak behind the covert.
 Vain thought! to hide them from the general scorn,
 That haunts, and dogs them, like an injur'd ghost
 Implacable.—Here too the *petty Tyrant*,
 Whose scant domains *Geographer* ne'er notic'd,
 And well for neighbouring grounds, of arms as short;
 Who fix'd his iron talents on the poor,
 And grip'd them like some lordly beast of prey;
 Deaf to the forceful cries of gnawing Hunger,
 And piteous plaintive voice of Misery:
 (As if a *Slave* were not a shred of nature,
 Of the same common nature with his *Lord*):
 Now tame and humble, like a child that's whipp'd,
 Shakes hands with dust, and calls the worm his kins-
 man;

Nor pleads his rank and birthright.—Under ground
Precedency's a jest; *Vassal* and *Lord*
 Grossly familiar, side by side consume.

When

THE GRAVE.
When self-esteem, or others adulation,
Would cunningly persuade us we are something
Above the common level of our kind;
The *Grave* gainsays the smooth-complexion'd flattery,
And, with blunt truth, acquaints us what we are.

Beauty—thou pretty play-thing, dear deceit,
That steals so softly o'er the stripling's heart,
And gives it a new pulse unknown before,
The *Grave* discredits thee: thy charms expung'd,
Thy roses faded, and thy lilies soil'd,
What hast thou more to boast off? Will thy *Lovers*
Flock round thee now, to gaze and do thee homage?
Methinks I see thee, with thy head low laid,
Whilst, surfeited upon thy damask cheek,
'The high-fed *Worm*, in lazy volumes roll'd,
Riots unscarr'd.—For this, was all thy caution?
For this, thy painful labours at thy glass?
T' improve those charms, and keep them in repair,
For which the *spoiler* thanks thee not. *Foul feeder*,
Coarse fare and carrion please thee full as well,
And leave as keen a relish on the sense.
Look how the fair one weeps!—the conscious tears
Stand thick as dew-drops on the bells of flow'rs:
Honest effusion! the swollen heart, in vain,
Works hard to put a gloss on its distress.

Strength too—thou surly, and less gentle boast
Of those that laugh loud at the village-ring:
A fit of common sickness pulls thee down
With greater ease, than e'er thou didst the stripling,
That rashly dar'd thee to th' unequal fight:
What groan was that I heard?—Deep groan indeed!
With anguish heavy laden; let me trace it:—
From yonder bed it comes, where the *strong man*,
By stronger arm belabour'd, gasps for breath,
Like a hard-hunted beast. How his great heart
Beats thick! his roomy chest, by far too scant

To

To give the lungs full play.—What now avail
The strong-built sinewy limbs, and well-spread shoulders?

See how he tugs for life, and lays about him,
Mad with his pain!——Eager he catches hold
Of what comes next to hand, and grasps it hard,
Just like a creature drowning; hideous sight!
Oh! how his eyes stand out, and stare full ghastly!
Whilst the distemper's rank and deadly venom
Shoots, like a burning arrow, cross his bowels,
And drinks his marrow up.—Heard you that groan?
It was his last.——See how the great *Goliath*,
Just like a child that brawl'd itself to rest,
Lies still.—What mean'st thou then, O mighty
Boaster

To vaunt of nerves of thine? What means the Bull,
Unconscious of his strength, to play the coward,
And flee before a feeble thing like man;
That, knowing well the slackness of his arm,
Trusts only in the well-invented knife?

With *Study* pale, and midnight vigils spent,
The star-surveying *Sage*, close to his eye
Applies the sight-invigorating tube;
And, travelling thro' the boundless length of space,
Marks well the courses of the far-seen orbs,
That roll with regular confusion there,
In ecstacy of thought. But, ah! proud Man,
Great heights are hazardous to the weak head:
Soon, very soon, thy firmest footing fails;
And down thou dropp'st into that darksome place,
Where *nor device, nor knowledge* ever came.

Here the *Tongue-Warrior* lies, disabled now,
Disarm'd, dishonour'd, like a wretch that's gagg'd,
And cannot tell his ail to passers by.
Great man of language,—whence this mighty change?
This dumb despair, and drooping of the head?

Tho'

Tho' strong persuasion hung upon thy lip,
 And fly Insinuation's softer arts,
 In ambush lay about thy flowing tongue;
 Alas! how chop-fall'n now? Thick mists and silence
 Rest, like a weary cloud, upon thy breast
 Unceasing.— Ah! where is the lifted arm,
 The strength of action, and the force of words,
 The well-turn'd *period*, and the well tun'd *voice*,
 With all the lesser ornaments of *Phrase*?
 Ah! fled for ever, as they ne'er had been;
 Raz'd from the book of *Fame*: or more provoking,
 Perchance some hackney hunger-bitten *Scribbler*
 Insults thy memory, and blots thy tomb
 With long flat narrative, or duller rhimes,
 With heavy halting pace that drawl along;—
 Enough to rouse a dead man into rage,
 And warm, with red resentment, the wan cheek.

Here the great masters of the *Healing-art*,
 These mighty mock-defrauders of the *Tomb*,
 Spite of their *juleps* and *catholicons*,
 Resign to Fate.—Proud *Æsculapius'* son!
 Where are thy boasted implements of Art,
 And all thy well-cramm'd magazines of health?
 Nor *hill*, nor *vale*, as far as ship could go,
 Nor margin of the gravel-bottom'd *brook*,
 Escap'd thy rifling hand:—from stubborn shrubs
 Thou wrung'st their shy-retiring Virtues out,
 And vex'd them in the fire: nor *fly*, nor *insect*,
 Nor wreathy *snake*, escap'd thy deep research.
 But why this *apparatus*? why this cost?
 Tell us, thou doughty keeper from the *Grave*,
 Where are thy *recipes* and *cordials* now,
 With the long list of *vouchers* for thy cures?
 Alas! thou speakest not.—The bold impostor
 Looks not more silly, when the cheat's found out.

Here the lank-sided *Miser*, worst of felons,

Who

Who meanly stole (discreditable shift)
 From *back*, and *belly* too, their proper cheer;
 Eas'd of a tax, it irk'd the wretch to pay
 To his own carcase; now lies cheaply lodg'd,
 By clam'rous Appetites no longer teaz'd,
 Nor tedious Bills of charges and repairs.
 But ah! where are his rents, his comings-in?
 Ay! now you've made the rich man poor indeed.
 Robb'd of his gods, what has he left behind?—

Oh! cursed lust of gold; when for thy sake,
 The fool throws up his int'rest in both Worlds;
 First *starv'd* in this, then *damn'd* in that to come.

How shocking must thy summons be, O *Death*!
 To him that is at ease in his possessions;

Who, counting on long years of pleasure here,
 Is quite unfurnish'd for that world to come
 In the dread moment, how the frantic Soul

Raves round the walls of her clay tenement,
 Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,
 But shrieks in vain!—How wishfully she looks

On all she's leaving, now no longer hers!
 A little longer, yet a little longer.
 Oh! might she stay to wash away her stains,

And fit her for her passage.—Mournful sight!
 Her very eyes weep blood;—and every Groan
 She heaves is big with horror.—But the Foe,

Like a stanch murd'rer, steady to his purpose,
 Pursues her close through ev'ry lane of Life,
 Nor misses once the track, but presses on;

Till forc'd at last to the tremendous Verge,
 At once she sinks to everlasting ruin.

Sure 'tis a serious thing to *die*! My soul,
 What a strange moment must it be, when, near
 Thy Journey's end, thou hast the gulph in view!

That awful gulph; no mortal e'er repass'd
 To tell what's doing on the other side.

Nature

Nature runs back and shudders at the sight,
 And ev'ry life-string bleeds at sight of parting;
 For part they must: *Body* and *Soul* must part;
 Fond couple; link'd more close than wedded pair:
This, wings its way to its *almighty Source*,
 The Witness of its actions, now its Judge;
That, drops into the dark and noisome *Grave*,
 Like a disabled *pitcher* of no use.

★ If *Death* were nothing; and nought after death;
 If when men dy'd, at once they ceas'd to be,
 Returning to the barren womb of *Nothing*,
 Whence first they sprung; then might the *Debauchee*,
 Untrembling, mouth the Heavens:—Then might the
Drunkard

Reel over his full bowl, and when 'tis drain'd,
 Fill up another to the brim, and laugh
 At the poor bugbear *Death*.—Then might the *Wretch*
 That's, weary of the world, and tir'd of life,
 At once give each inquietude the slip,
 By stealing out of being, when he pleas'd,
 And by that way; whether by *hemp*, or *steel*.
Death's thousand doors stand open.—Who could force
 The ill-pleas'd guest to sit out his full time,
 Or blame him if he goes?—Sure he does well
 That helps himself, as timely as he can,
 When able.—But if there's an *Hereafter*,
 And that there is, *Conscience*, uninfluenc'd
 And suffer'd to speak out, tells ev'ry man;
 Then must it be an awful thing to die
 More horrid yet, to die by one's own hand.
Self-murder!—name it not: *our Island's shame*:
 That makes her the reproach of neighbouring states.
 Shall *Nature*, swerving from her earliest dictate
 Self-preservation, fall by her own act
Forbid it Heaven!—Let not, upon disgust,
 The shameless hand be foully crimson'd o'er
 With blood of its own lord.—Dreadful attempt!

Just

Just reeking from self-slaughter, in a rage
 To rush into the presence of our Judge;
 As if we challeng'd him to do his worst,
 And matter'd not his wrath.—Unheard of tortures
 Must be reserv'd for such: these herd together;
 The common damn'd shun their society,
 And look upon themselves as fiends less foul.
 Our time is fix'd, and all our days are number'd;
 How long, how short, we know not:—this we know,
 Duty requires we calmly wait the summons,
 Nor dare to stir till Heav'n shall give permission:
 Like Centries that must keep their destin'd stand,
 And wait th' appointed hour, till they're reliev'd.
 Those only are the brave, that keep their ground,
 And keep it to the last. To run away,
 Is but a coward's trick: To run away,
 From this world's ills, that, at the very worst,
 Will soon blow o'er, thinking to mend ourselves
 By boldly vent'ring on the world unknown,
 And plunging headlong in the dark;—'tis made
 No frenzy half so desperate as this.

Tell us, ye Dead: will none of you, in pity
 To those you left behind, disclose the secret?
 Oh! that some courteous ghost would blab it out:
 What 'tis you are, and we must shortly be.
 I've heard, that souls departed, have sometimes
 Forewarn'd men of their death:—'Twas kindly done
 To knock, and give the alarm.—But what means
 This stinted charity?—'Tis but lame kindness
 That does its work by halves.—Why might you not
 Tell us what 'tis to die?—Do the strict laws
 Of your society forbid your speaking
 Upon a point so nice?—I'll ask no more:
 Sullen, like lamps in sepulchres, your shine
 Enlightens but yourselves. Well,—'tis no matter;
 A very little time will clear up all,
 And make us learn'd as you are, and as close.

Death's

Death's shafts fly thick:—Here falls the village-swain,
 And *there* his pamper'd Lord.—The cup goes round;
 And who so artful as to put it by?
 'Tis long since *Death* had the majority;
 Yet strange! *the Living lay it not to heart.*—
 See yonder maker of the dead man's bed,
 The *Sexton*, hoary-headed chronicle,
 Of hard unmeaning face, down which ne'er stole
 A gentle Tear; with mattock in his hand
 Digs thro' whole rows of Kindred and Acquaintance,
 By far his juniors.——Scarce a *scull's* cast up,
 But well he knew its *Owner*, and can tell
 Some passage of his life.—Thus, hand in hand,
 The *foe* has walk'd with *Death* twice twenty years;
 And yet, ne'er *Yonker* on the green laughs louder,
 Or clubs a smuttier tale:—When *Drunkards* meet,
 None sings a merrier catch, or lends a hand
 More willing to his cup.—*Poor wretch!* he minds not,
 That soon some *trusty Brother* of the trade
 Shall do for him what he has done for *thousands*!

On *this* side, and on *that*, men see their friends
 Drop off, like leaves in autumn; yet launch out
 Into fantastic schemes, which the long Livers,
 In the world's hale and undegenerate days,
 Could scarce have leisure for.—Fools that we are,
 Never to think of *Death* and of *ourselves*
 At the same time! as if to learn to die
 Were no concern of ours—Oh! more than sottish,
 For creatures of a *Day*, in gamefome mood,
 To frolic on *Eternity's* dread brink
 Unapprehensive; when, for ought we know,
 The very first swollen Surge shall sweep us in.
 Think we, or think we not, *Time* hurries on
 With a resistless unremitting stream;
 Yet treads more soft than e'er did *midnight-thief*,
 That slides his hand under the *Miser's* pillow,

And

And carries off his prize.—What is *this World*?
 What? but a spacious *burial-field* unwall'd,
 Strew'd with *Death's spoils*, the spoils of animals
 Savage and tame, and full of dead men's bones.
 The very *turf*, on which we tread, *once liv'd*:
 And we that *live* must lend our carcases
 To cover our own offspring:—In their turns
They too must cover *theirs*.—'Tis here all meet:
 The shiv'ring *Icelander*, and sun-burnt *Moor*:
 Men of all climes, that never met before;
 And of all creeds, the *Jew*, the *Turk*, and *Christian*.
 Here the proud *Prince*, and *Favourite* yet prouder,
 His *Sov'reign's keeper*, and the *people's scourge*,
 Are huddled out of sight.—Here lie abash'd
 The great *Negotiators* of the *earth*,
 And celebrated *Masters* of the *balance*,
 Deep read in stratagems, and wiles of courts.
 Now *vain* their *Treaty-skill*:—*Death* scorns to *treat*.
 Here the o'erloaded *Slave* flings down his burden
 From his gall'd shoulders:—And when the cruel
Tyrant,

With all its guards and tools of pow'r about him,
 Is meditating new unheard-of hardships,
 Mocks his short arm;—and, quick as thought, escapes,
 Where *Tyrants* vex not, and the *Weary* rest,
 Here the warm *Lover*, leaving the cool shade,
 The tell-tale *Echo*, and the babbling stream,
 (Time out of mind the fav'rite seats of Love,)
 Fast by his gentle *Mistress* lays him down
 Unblasted by foul tongue.—Here *friends* and *foes*
 Lie close; unmindful of their former feuds.
 The lawn-rob'd *Prelate*, and the plain *Presbyter*,
 E'er while that stood aloof, as shy to meet,
Familiar mingle here, like sister-streams
 That some rude interposing rock had split.
 Here is the large-limb'd *Peasant*:—Here the *Child*
 Of a span long, that never saw the sun,
 Nor press'd the nipple; strangled in life's porch.

Here

THE GRAVE.
Here is the *Mother* with her *sons* and *daughters*;
The barren *Wife*: and long-demurring *Maid*,
Whose lonely unappropriated sweets
Smil'd like yon knot of cowslips on the cliff,
Not to be come at by the willing hand.

Here are the *Prude* severe, and gay *Coquet*,
The sober *Widow*, and the young green *Virgin*,
Cropp'd like a rose, before 'tis fully blown,
Or half its worth disclos'd.—*Strange medley here!*

Here garrulous old *Age* winds up his tale;
And jovial *Youth*, of lightsome vacant heart,
Whose ev'ry day was made of melody, (*Shrew*,
Hears not the voice of mirth:—The shrill-tongu'd
Meek as the *turtle-dove*, forgets her chiding.

Here are the *wise*, the *generous*, and the *brave*;
The *just*, the *good*, the *worthless*, the *profane*,
The down-right *clown*, and perfectly well-bred;
The *fool*, the *churl*, the *scoundrel*, and the *mean*,
The subtle *statesman*, and the patriot stern;
The *wreck of Nations*, and the *spoils of Time*,
With all the *lumber* of six thousand years.

Poor *Man*—how happy once, in thy *first state*!
When, yet but warm from thy great *Maker's* hand,
He stamp'd thee with *his image*, and, well pleas'd,
Smil'd on his last fair work.—Then all was well.—
Sound was the *Body*, and the *Soul* serene;
Like two sweet instruments, ne'er out of tune,
That play their several parts.—Nor *head*, nor *heart*,
Offer'd to ache:—Nor was there cause they should;
For all was pure within:—No fell remorse,
Nor anxious castings-up of what might be,
Alarm'd his peaceful bosom:—*Summer seas*
Shew not more smooth, when kiss'd by southern winds
Just ready to expire.—Scarce importun'd,
The generous soil, with a luxurious hand,
Offer'd the various produce of the year,
And ev'ry thing most perfect in its kind.

Blessed!

Blessed ! thrice blessed days ! — But ah ! how short ! —
Bless'd as the pleasing dreams of holy men ;
But fugitive like those, and quickly gone.
Oh ! slippery state of things. — What sudden turns ;
What strange vicissitudes in the first leaf
Of man's sad *history* ? — To-day most *happy*,
And e'er to-morrow's sun has set, most *abject*.
How scant the space between these vast extremes ?
Thus far'd it with *our Sire* ; — Not long h' enjoy'd
His paradise. — Scarce had the happy tenant
Of the fair spot, due time to prove its sweets,
Or sum them up ; when strait, he must be gone,
Ne'er to return again. — And must he go ? —
Can nought compound for the *first dire offence*
Of *erring man* ? — Like one that is condemn'd,
Fain would he trifle time with idle talk,
And parley with his fate. — But 'tis in vain.
Not all the lavish odours of the place,
Offer'd in incense, can procure his pardon,
Or mitigate his doom. — A mighty *Angel*,
With *flaming sword*, forbids his longer stay,
And drives the loiterer forth ; nor must he take
One last and farewell round. — At once he lost
His *glory*, and his *God*. — If mortal now
And sorely maim'd, no wonder. — *Man has sinn'd*.
Sick of his bliss, and bent on new adventures,
Evil he would needs try : Nor try'd in vain.
(Dreadful experiment ! destructive measure !
Where the worst thing could happen, is success.)
Alas ! too well he sped : — The *good* he scorn'd
Stalk'd off reluctant, like an ill-us'd ghost,
Not to return ; — or if it did, its visits,
Like those of *Angels*, short and far between :
Whilst the black *Demon* with his hell-scap'd train,
Admitted once into its better room,
Grew loud and mutinous, nor would be gone ;
Lording it o'er the *Man* : who now, too late,
Saw the rash error, which he could not mend :

An

An error fatal not to *him* alone,
 But to his future *sons*, his fortune's *heirs*.
 Inglorious bondage!—Human nature groans
 Beneath a vassalage so vile and cruel,
 And its vast body bleeds through ev'ry vein.

What havock hast thou made, foul monster, *Sin*!
 Greatest and first of Ills.—The fruitful parent
 Of Woes of all dimensions!—But for *thee*
 Sorrow had never been.—All-noxious thing,
 Of vilest nature!—Other sorts of Evils
 Are kindly circumscrib'd, and have their bounds.
 The fierce *Vulcano*, from his burning entrails,
 That belches molten Stone and globes of Fire,
 Involv'd in pitchy clouds of smoke and stench,
 Marrs the adjacent fields, for some leagues round,
 And there it stops.—The big-swoln *Inundation*,
 Of mischief more diffusive, raving loud,
 Buries whole tracks of country, threat'ning more;
 But that too has its shore it cannot pass.
 More dreadful far than these! *Sin* has laid waste,
 Not here and there a *country*, but a *World*:
Dispatching, at a wide extended blow,
 Entire *mankind*; and, for their sakes, *defacing*
 A whole *Creation's* beauty with rude hands;
 Blasting the foodful grain, the loaded branches,
 And marking, all along, its way with ruin.
 Accursed Thing!—Oh! where shall *Fancy* find
 A proper name to call thee by, expressive
 Of all thy horrors?—Pregnant womb of Ills!
 Of Temper so transcendantly malign,
 That Toads and Serpents, of most deadly kind,
 Compar'd to thee, are harmless.—Sickneffes
 Of ev'ry size and symptom, racking pains,
 And bluest plagues, are thine.—See how the fiend
 Profusely scatters the contagion round!
 Whilst deep-mouth'd *Slaughter*, bellowing at her
 heels,

Wades

*Wades deep in blood new-spilt; yet for to-morrow,
Shapes out new work, of great uncommon daring,
And inly pines till the dread blow is struck.*

But hold,—I've gone too far; too much discover'd
My Father's nakedness, and Nature's shame.
Here let me pause, and drop an honest tear,—
One burst of filial duty and condolence,
O'er all those ample deserts *Death* hath spread,
This *Chaos* of mankind.——O great *Man-eater!*
Whose ev'ry day is *Carnival*, nor sated yet!
Unheard-of *Epicure!* without a fellow!
The veriest *Gluttons* do not always cram;
Some intervals of abstinence are sought
To edge the appetite: *Thou* seekest none.
Methinks the countless swarms thou hast devour'd,
And thousands that each hour thou globbest up;
This, less than *this*, might gorge thee to the full:
But ah! rapacious still, thou gap'st for more;
Like one, whole days defrauded of his meals,
On whom lank Hunger lays her skinny hand,
And whets to keenest eagerness his cravings.
(As if diseases, massacres, and poison,
Famine, and war, were not thy Caterers.)

But know, that thou *must render up thy dead*,
And with high int'rest too.—They are not thine;
But only in thy keeping for a season,
Till the great promis'd day of *Restitution*;
When loud diffusive sound from brazen trump
Of strong-lung'd *Cherub*, shall alarm thy captives,
And rouse the long, long sleepers into life,
Day-light, and liberty.——
Then must thy *gates fly open*, and reveal
The mines that lay long forming under ground,
In their dark cells immur'd; but now full ripe,
And pure as silver from the crucible,
That twice has stood the torture of the fire

And

And inquisition of the forge.——We know,
 Th' illustrious Deliverer of mankind,
 THE SON OF GOD, thee foil'd.—Him in thy pow'r
 Thou could'st not hold :—self-vigorous he rose,
 And, shaking off thy fetters, soon retook
 Those spoils his voluntary yielding lent ;
 (Sure pledge of our releasement from thy thrall !)
 Twice twenty days he sojourn'd here on earth,
 And shew'd himself alive to *chosen Witnesses*,
 By proof so strong, that the most slow assenting
 Had not a scruple left.——This having done,
 He mounted up to heav'n.—Methinks I see him
 Climb the aerial heights, and glide along
 Athwart severing clouds : but the faint eye,
 Flung backwards in the chace, soon drops its hold ;
 Disabled quite, and jaded with pursuing.
 Heav'n's portals wide expand to let him in ;
 Nor are his friends shut out : As some great Prince,
 Not for himself alone, procures admission,
 But for his train :——It was his Royal will,
 That where *he* is, *there* should his *followers* be.
 Death only lies between.——A gloomy path !
 Made yet more gloomy by our coward fears :
 But not untrod, nor tedious : the fatigue
 Will soon go off.—Besides there's no by-road
 To bliss.—Then why, like ill-condition'd children,
 Start we at transient hardships in the way
 That leads to purer air, and softer skies,
 And a ne'er-setting sun ?—Fools that we are !
 We wish to be where Sweets unwith'ring bloom :
 But straight our wish revoke, and will not go.
 So have I seen upon a summer's ev'n,
 Fast by the riv'let's brink, a Youngster play ;
 How wishfully he looks to stem the tide !
 This moment resolute, next unresolv'd :
 At last he dips his foot ; but, as he dips,
 His fears redouble, and he runs away
 From th' inoffensive stream, unmindful now

Of all the flow'rs that paint the farther bank,
And smil'd so sweet of late.——Thrice welcome
Death!

That, after many a painful bleeding step,
Conducts us to our home, and lands us safe
On the long-wish'd for shore —Prodigious change!
Our bane turn'd to a blessing!—*Death* disarm'd
Looses her feltness quite.——All thanks to him
Who scourg'd the venom out.——*Sure the last end
Of the good Man is Peace!*—How calm his Exit!
Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.
Behold him, in the evening-tide of Life,
A life well spent, whose early care it was
His riper years should not upbraid his green:
By unperceiv'd degrees he wears away;
Yet, like the sun, seems larger at his setting.
(High in his faith and hopes,) look how he reaches
After the prize in view! and, like a bird
That's hamper'd, struggles hard to get away!
Whilst the glad gates of sight are wide expanded
To let new glories in, the first fair fruits
Of the fast-coming harvest.——*Then!—Oh then!*
Each earth-born joy grows vile, or disappears;
Shrunk to a thing of nought.——*Oh!* how he longs
To have his passport sign'd, and be dismiss'd!—
'Tis done! and now he's happy!—The glad *Soul*
Has not a wish uncrown'd.——*Ev'n the lag Flesh
Rests too in Hope* of meeting once again
Its better half, never to sunder more.
Nor shall it hope in vain.——The time draws on,
When not a single spot of burial-earth,
Whether on Land, or in the spacious Sea,
But must give back its long-committed dust
Inviolat:—And faithfully shall these
Make up the full account;—not the least atom
Imbezzi'd, or mislaid, of the whole tale.

Each

Each *Soul* shall have a *Body* ready furnish'd;
 And *each* shall have *his own*.—Hence ye profane,
 Ask not, how this can be?—Sure the same pow'r
 That rear'd the piece at first, and took it down,
 Can re-assemble the loose scatter'd parts;
 And put them as they were.—*Almighty God*
 Has done much more; nor is his arm impair'd
 Thro' length of days: And what *he can, he will*:
 His Faithfulness stands bound to see it done.

When the dread *Trumpet* sounds, the slumb'ring
 dust,

(Not unattentive to the call,) shall wake:
 And ev'ry joint possess its proper place,
 With a new elegance of form, unknown
 To its first state.—Nor shall the conscious *soul*
 Mistake its partner, but amidst the Crowd,
 Singling its other half, into its arms
 Shall rush, with all th' impatience of a man
 That's new come home, who, having long been ab-
 sent,

With haste runs over ev'ry different room,
 In pain to see the whole.—*Thrice happy meeting!*—
 Nor *Time*, nor *Death*, shall ever part them more.

'Tis but a *Night*, a long and moonless *Night*,
 We make the *Grave* our *bed*, and then are gone.

Thus, at the shut of ev'n, the weary *Bird*
 Leaves the wide air, and, in some lonely brake,
 Cow'rs down, and dozes till the dawn of day,
 Then *claps* his well-fleg'd *wings*, and *bears away*.

F I N I S.

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